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# CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

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# CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

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## The Outlines of the Peace

The world waited breathlessly for the outcome of the secret "Big Three" conference. It waited breathlessly because the fate of the world's peace hung in the balance. The great powers had been drifting apart. Would they be able to achieve a tolerable unity again? The results of the conference have been greeted with the most contradictory estimates. Some people found their apprehensions allayed and therefore rejoiced. Others looked at the price which was paid for the new cement of unity between the Big Three and groaned. Those who rejoiced did so because the conference established a minimal basis for international order. Those who groaned were dismayed by the fact that so much justice was sacrificed for so little order. We must make any necessary sacrifice for the sake of order, say those who rejoice over the results. If Russia is demanding too much of Poland, the price must be paid rather than run the risk of war with Russia. If we can set the world in a frame-work of international order, problems of justice can be gradually worked out. If you pay too high a price for order, say the critics, you will create an order so unjust that it will be destroyed almost as quickly as the Nazi order was destroyed.

How can one arrive at a stable moral equilibrium on this question? One has the impression that many who rejoice

could almost as easily have groaned and vice versa. A hair not only divides the false and true but the reaction of men to the ambiguities of international politics. Perhaps we ought not to arrive at a stable equilibrium. Significantly those who hailed the results of the conference most vocally were on the whole people who were afraid that any failure of the conference might give aid and comfort to the isolationists and nationalists who would use every opportunity to persuade America to back out of international responsibilities. The combination of idealism and nationalism which has bedeviled American foreign policy is regarded as such a terrible peril by all who have a sense of responsibility toward the world community that they would accept almost any kind of international compromise, rather than run the risk of supporting that error. This consideration for instance has prompted many of the church sentiments on Dumbarton Oaks and on the Crimean conference. Of course we must admit that we could go so far in trying to prevent a self-righteous withdrawal of America from the world community that we would fall into obvious dishonesties. Some of the compromises reached at Yalta are really bad; and we ought to say so.

Perhaps the best policy is to affirm the necessity of sticking to our great allies for the sake of order, while at the same time calling attention to the great peril which the agreement at Yalta con-



tain. Actions have a narrower range than judgments. In terms of action at the moment, we must either accept or reject the agreement. Within that narrow range of choice we can only accept, and not reject. But our judgments must be wider than our actions. Our judgments must comprehend that the great powers are setting themselves up as judges of the world and of Europe, that the world will resent this over-lordship and that it will be soon apparent how justified this resentment will be. The three great powers are not good enough to govern the world just as no one is ever good enough to govern anyone else without the consent of the governed and without the power of the governed to resist the pretensions of the powerful. Already the powers have settled the problems of Poland, Greece and Yugoslavia arbitrarily. The motives which prompted their solutions were in almost every case concern for their own interest, rather than for the peculiar circumstances of each smaller nation. Is there any reason for instance that the same radical forces should be accepted in Yugoslavia which were rejected in Greece except that the one nation has been assigned to a Russian and the other to a British sphere of influence? Was there any reason why both de-industrialization and reparations were demanded of Germany but the fact that these two contradictory policies represented the conflicting demands of Russia and the west? The fact that no genuine agreement on this issue was reached and that therefore the policy of unconditional surrender was made even more absurd by these conflicting demands upon the to-be vanquished foe, reveals how far we must still go before we have a really stable accord between the great powers.

We do not yet know whether the

agreement between the great powers is really an agreement to disagree. Such an agreement would express itself in partitioning Europe and the world and allowing each one of the powers its particular sphere. That might keep peace for a little while but not for very long. There are strong suggestions of a partitioning policy in recent developments. On the other hand some progress has been made in arriving at mutual agreements.

Whether we are prompted in our attitude toward the coming peace primarily by our hopes or by our fears, it must be apparent to even the most sanguine that the historic resources for a really creative peace are lacking. The best we can do is to lay minimal foundations and hope that they will not crumble when we begin to rear a superstructure.

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### Religious Faith and Historical Hope

The alternations of hope and fear with which we look into the future and the ambivalence between moral criticism and approbation with which we view international achievements, reveal how erroneous modern Christianity has been in its excessive emphasis upon historical hopes and fulfillments. The identification of the Kingdom of God with history is coming to a sorry end. There are always situations of injustice, of poverty, and of war which challenge our moral energy. We must seek to overcome these evils. Insofar as we overcome them we do realize the will of God on earth; insofar as they are overcome by the forces of historical destiny, the prayer "thy Kingdom come on earth" is, in a sense answered. But it is answered only in a sense. If we claim ultimate significance for any of these



achievements they will lead us into religious and moral confusion.

Already there are pacifists who were revolted at the idea of resisting Hitler who are not at all revolted by the kind of peace we are going to make. They insist that since it is a peace which will guarantee order, we must accept it. We agree with them about the necessity of accepting it, despite its awful moral contradictions; but we don't understand why the logic which forces them to accept it did not also prompt them to understand the necessity of resisting Hitler. Of course the realities of military conflict are a little more shocking than the peace will be. But there will be some pretty brutal use of force in the peace. Surely we can not draw so absolute a line between the overt and the covert use of force as to justify this great difference in attitude. Our pacifist friends, who accept Dumbarton Oaks, will defend themselves by insisting that force will be used in the peace for the sake of world unity. They regard such force as very different than force used between contending parties in a conflict. But the force used against Hitler was also used in the interest of a world community which Nazism sought to enslave. Of course all kinds of egoistic and nationalistic motives corrupted this higher motive; but that will also be true in the new world community which we hope the Dumbarton Oaks will bring into being.

None of these distinctions really hold; and they are not really determinative in the spiritual attitude toward the plans for world peace. What is determinative is the old identification between history and the Kingdom of God in American Protestant liberalism. This liberalism assumes that history is a redemptive process in which moral contradictions are

gradually being overcome. Actually history is a creative process in which the problem of relating ourselves to our fellowmen is presented to us in wider and wider terms. We must solve the problem in these ever wider terms, or perish. In that sense the Kingdom of God always impinges upon every moment of history. But our solution of these problems contain the same moral contradictions which the problems contained. In a world wide community, which has no other means of cohesion, more force has to be used than is advisable from the standpoint of justice. In a world which has no universal sovereignty for a universal community, the force which must be used must be drawn from particular nations, having their particular interests. They are certain to introduce a considerable degree of nationalistic corruption into their pretensions of universal justice.

If we do not understand these perpetual moral contradictions in the political order we will, some day, be as revolted by the peace as we were by the war. There are, in fact, pacifists today who refused to participate in this war because they participated too uncritically in the last one. Next time they will refuse to participate in the next venture of peace because they were too uncritical about this one. For we can be quite sure that the peace which we are about to make will revolt the conscience at many a point.

These curious gyrations of the moral mind are derived from the error of placing too much confidence in history and of perpetually compensating for the disappointments of today by an excessive trust in the history of tomorrow. History today and tomorrow, history at any point where it is viewed from the per-



spective of Christian faith, contains both fulfillments and contradictions of the divine will. The contrite soul will recognize these contradictions as due not to the force of some collective evil outside itself but as merely the collective expression of what is in the soul of the best of us. We must have coercion in politics because the best of us are not good enough to create a wide community on a purely voluntary basis! and this force causes injustices as well as order because the best of us use the power which is available to us for selfish as well as communal ends.

If we recognize this fact and cease covering it with veils and illusions we can enter the Kingdom of God at any particular point in the escalator of history. It is a Kingdom of grace and forgiveness. It brings the kind of peace to the soul which obviates the feverish necessity of hoping for a kind of peace tomorrow which is beyond the resources of tomorrow. It is not the kind of serenity which destroys the power to build such peace in the human community as is possible and necessary within our historic conditions. We can in fact, be more clear-eyed and consistent in our labors for a tolerable pace in the human community if we do not ask of that community the kind of peace which the world can not give or take away.

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### The Plight of Germany

There is a particular ominous note in the Crimean agreement of the "Big Three," in the section dealing with Germany. The German nation is never mentioned. The German people are promised the right to live, but only the people and never the nation is referred to. The nation is to be occupied by the var-

ious powers; and the occupation will be for so long a period that this policy may well lead to the partitioning of Germany. All industry which can be used for war purposes is either to be destroyed or controlled. Our own experience proves that there is practically no industry which can not be converted to military purposes. This threat may therefore well contain the Morgenthau plan of de-industrialization. The Russian desire for reparations is added to the western ambition for the destruction of the German industrial potential.

It is highly probable that one reason why the statement on Germany is both vague and contradictory is that it incorporates contradictory policies between Russia and the west. Russia knows what to do with Germany both economically and politically. Economically it wants an undestroyed German industry to help rebuild Russia. Politically Russia desires to relate Germany to her general orbit of political power. The west on the other hand is afraid of German economic competition in Europe and at a loss in regard to a plan even for a weakened Germany in the general arrangements of the continent. The Yalta agreement seems not to have resolved this difference in policy between Russia and the west. As a consequence both policies are hinted at. German industry must both be destroyed and pay reparations.

In addition to these threats to German existence Germany will undoubtedly lose both East Prussia and Silesia in the east and the Rhineland in the west. Either some 12 million Germans will live under foreign rule or an effort will be made to force them into the rump of a dismembered Germany. There is in short every indication that the German threat to the world peace is to be over-



come by the essential destruction of Germany.

The best that can be said for such a policy is that the German crime against civilization has been so terrible that there is simply not enough grace in civilization to deal with this monstrous evil. Not only has the unbelievable brutality of the Nazis created a tremendous wave of hatred and vindictiveness among all the nations. The effectiveness of German aggression has also created a strong sense of insecurity, which is accentuated by the real or supposed ambition of the Nazis to go underground and prepare for another war. It can not be denied that history has seldom seen so stubborn and consistent a form of fanatic fury as the Nazis have unleashed upon the world. Considering how little grace there is even among individuals, when faced with the problem of forgiving a palpable crime, it is hardly surprising that the collective behaviour of nations can not rise to the point of so relating forgiveness to justice that forgiveness will not be sentimental and justice will not become self-defeating. The Nazi evil has, in other words, been so great that it is bound to unleash untold forms of retaliatory evil into history.

It is possible to understand all this as one views the tortuous processes of history. Yet there must be a point of detachment of the Christian conscience from these terrible realities of history. The nations may not know how deeply they are involved in the guilt of the war. But there must be a leaven of Christians (including those who follow Christ without fully knowing Him) who understand this. Nations are constitutionally self-righteous; but Christians know that the judgment of God is upon all the nations, and most particularly upon their preten-

sions of righteousness. The passions of war may lead to a blind identification of all Germans with the Nazi crimes. But Christians must preserve some sense of compassion for the millions who were unwittingly caught in various forms of collective complicity with the Nazi crimes. It must be mentioned incidentally that individual complicity in collective crime contains infinite gradations from responsible collaboration to the conscious resistance of a system in which the individual is involved against his will. In between lie momentary complicity and final resistance to the collective crime; partial complicity and partial resistance; inner resistance without overt betrayal of it, inner resistance with some overt opposition and a dozen other gradations. This vast and complex relation of individuals to a collective crime is not described by counting Nazi and anti-Nazi noses. It is quite probable (if one were to hazard a guess) that there are let us say three million explicit Nazis in Germany and two million explicit anti-Nazis and that all the rest of the population fall into intermediate categories of partial complicity. Even the wisest and most objective statesmanship could never do full justice to all of these shades of guilt. Wherefore it is inevitable at best that the guiltless will suffer with the guilty, as indeed they have already done. (The cities most heavily bombed in Germany contained the largest number of explicit anti-Nazis for instance). The world will not be wise enough to make these distinctions. What is worse, it will not have much inclination to do so. Christians will not be wise enough either to make them but they ought to have a strong inclination to do so and a strong sense of compassion for the terrible suffering of the guiltless, which will be caused by both our inabil-



ity and disinclination to make such distinctions.

The nations will incline to pile their own punishment upon the terrible punishments which history has already visited upon Germany. They do not know the truth of the words: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, sayeth the Lord." They will not know that if Germany repents at all it can do so more easily under the chastisements of the Lord, which are in this case the punishments which automatically followed upon the German aggression than they can under the self-righteous punishment of victors, who will obscure the divine judgments by their aberrations.

Never before has it been so necessary that the Christian faith become the "remnant of the Lord" and that the Christian church be a community which understands the character of divine judgment even if no one else understands it. It is already apparent that, whatever the virtues of the new Russia, one of its greatest vices is its constitutional self-righteousness. Opponents of its policy are automatically "fascists." And toward Germany there is not a suggestion of that leaven of compassion which does slightly leaven the attitudes of the western world. Thus *Pravada* heaped scorn and contempt upon Sir Stafford Cripps' observation that Christian faith prevents us from becoming the judge of the Germans and persuades us that only God can be our judge and theirs. For *Pravada* this was an incomprehensible piece of theological obscurantism. Unfortunately we do not have as much of that kind of obscurantism in the supposedly Christian world as is required to prevent the worst forms of vindictiveness.

## The Coming Domestic Battle

The struggle for the confirmation of Henry Wallace is a preview of the political battles which will agitate this nation for decades to come. Wallace believes that the powers of government must be used to guarantee minimal economic security for the whole of our population. His opponents have the belief that if only we could return to a purer *laissez faire* system and remove all governmental restraints, American business would flower into a hitherto unknown prosperity. The conservatives seek to fasten the label of "dreamer" upon Mr. Wallace when in fact their nostalgic fantasies are the kind of dreams which will turn into nightmares. A highly technical civilization, with its vast system of interdependence, can not return to the semi-automatic processes of the early days of capitalism without bringing disaster upon all of us. The same conservatives who portray Mr. Wallace as a dreamer are engaged in a fantasy which sends shivers down the spines of wiser conservatives in wiser nations than our own. Thus *The Economist*, organ of enlightened Toryism in Britain, argues that it may be unwise for Britain to become too closely linked to American economic arrangements, precisely because American conservatism is almost bound to plunge our nation into disaster by its fantastic devotion to the idea of "Free enterprise."

The conservatives picture Mr. Wallace as not only a dreamer but as a government spendthrift who will scatter money abroad recklessly. Actually one of the issues at stake is whether the conservatives shall have the right to sell twenty billion dollars worth of government owned industrial plant at a dis-



count. They would like to buy it at 20 cents on the dollar. Such a policy would be regarded as good business; while Mr. Wallace's desire to use government credit for small business is regarded as reckless.

The ability of one of the most stupid forms of political reaction in any modern country to clothe itself in the appearance of political wisdom and to fasten the appearance of political imbecility upon its critics and opponents is a remarkable achievement of modern journalism and proves to what degree modern democracy must be able not only to resist entrenched economic power but also the minions of that power in our daily journalism. Fortunately the common man has achieved a considerable degree of political sophistication and knows how to discount these journalistic tricks which turn black into white and bitter into sweet. Some of the professional middle classes, including many parsons, are not so sophisticated. A parson in New York recently preached a sermon in which he declared his preference for a Godless man, in government well versed in business, over a "Christian dreamer." This parson happened to be a fundamentalist who thought it unwise to interfere in politics except in cases of grave emergency. He thought the threat of Mr. Wallace represented such an emergency.

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### Spiritual Mobilization

The movement entitled "Spiritual Mobilization" conducted by Dr. James Fifiield of Los Angeles is one of the worst forms of religious rationalization of a class viewpoint which we have had in American history. Dr. Fifiield declares that the preservation of the "free enter-

prise system" is a matter of religious concern because free enterprise is so intimately related to "freedom of worship" in the whole democratic system that it becomes a religious duty to defend the one for the sake of preserving the other.

He claims that his movement is purely religious and not political because he never explicitly identifies the "pagan stateism" which he regards as the enemy of religious freedom. But it is quite apparent that what he is after is the general tendency toward political control of economic process which is associated in America with the "New Deal." His millionaire supporters are under no illusion about this identification. They give him all the money he needs to make this supposedly religious, but actually political attack, upon their foes.

Almost every aspect of Dr. Fifiield's propaganda is dishonest. It is dishonest to identify a state which seeks for a larger measure of control of economic life with a state which makes itself God. Britain and Sweden have gone further in political control of economics than has the New Deal. But there is no suggestion of the perils of "pagan stateism" in these nations. The suggestion that only an archaic *laissez faire* economics can save us from Nazi totalitarianism introduces a stupid and dishonest fear into the nice calculations which modern democracy must make upon this vexing subject.

While Dr. Fifiield falsely accuses the proponents of a managed economy of identifying the state with God, he actually engages in an unscrupulous identification of a particular class prejudice with the divine. The exaggerated devotion to "free enterprise" is an aberration of the wealthy classes of this country and hides and expresses their fears of



social change. Even without the benefit of clergy this fear is more exaggerated in our nation than in any other. Dr. Fifield strengthens this fear by religious sanction.

The final test of any true prophet is whether he has a word of God spoken against his group and not merely for it. By that test Dr. Fifield is a false prophet. He has not pointed out to his wealthy admirers that while they speak glibly of the value of freedom in preference to the value of security, they do nothing to establish the security of the masses and little to give social justification to the freedom of their power. There is no woe in Dr. Fifield's gospel upon "the rulers of Israel" and no judgment upon the financial oligarchy of this nation. He does not help the wealthy to realize that the demand for stronger state control upon business springs from the increased power of industry and finance in the community and from the peril to justice which resides in this power.

Even when no religious sanctities are appealed to it, is dishonest to scare people with the perils of state power if these are not considered in comparison with

the perils of irresponsible economic power. The growth of state power is neither a caprice of history, nor the fruit of "paganism." It is the consequence of the community's effort to protect itself against irresponsible economic power.

The whole campaign of the "free enterprise" proponents dishonestly obscures the real issues involved in the relation between political and economic power. But the religious campaign in support of free enterprise is particularly dishonest, precisely because it seeks to give an ultimate religious sanction to a particular social movement without offering a word of criticism from the religious perspective upon the perils of that movement.

Dr. Fifield claims to represent 52% of American Protestant ministers. It is to be hoped that this is a falsehood. If over half of our Protestant clergy are either the knowing or the unwitting accomplices of a campaign to further the particular interests and to support the particular prejudices of the plutocratic class of the nation, the state of Protestantism in our society is even worse than we had assumed it to be.





# GOD AND THE WAR

By JOSEPH HAROUTUNIAN

God's activity in this war and the Christian man's duty in the midst of its terrors constitute a twin problem which disturbs the church's mind to its very depths. Hence we cannot but be grateful for the recent pamphlet on "The Relation of the Church to the War in the Light of the Christian Faith," prepared by "twenty-six of America's outstanding Christian scholars," after two years of consultation and labor.\* This is indeed a weighty document, and deserves close study and constructive criticism. If the truths it sets forth and the questions it raises are discussed seriously and thoroughly, there will be considerable light shed upon our present perplexities. We offer the following reflections as a contribution to such a discussion. Doubtless the writers of the document who have given much thought to the questions we raise will be happy to clarify our minds concerning them.

Let us begin with God's relation to the present war. The writers define this relation "in broad terms by His essential unitary activity as Creator, Redeemer, Life-Giver," and they add, "God is active in all these personal ways (p. 29)." This section of the pamphlet states emphatically that "the existence of every situation depends on the creative energy of God's will, put forth not merely in some past moment of time but throughout all time." Such statements may well mean that all events, including

this war, happen in consequence of God's activity, involving His total personal Being; that this war has come about according to Divine volition.

On the other hand, the writers are not prepared to accept the common sense deductions one is likely to make from theism as stated above. "God does not act as a world Ruler who has willed the outbreak of the war, nor all those specific antecedent conditions that made the war inescapable (p. 31)." They attribute the genesis of the war to "natural forces," to moral order, and to "personal decisions of men." In this connection, God's activity is considered as keeping these several aspects of His creation in existence and operation. The writers say plainly that "The specific decisions that make war break out are men's decisions, not God's (p. 35)."

The distinction between events due to "natural forces" and those due to God's decision is due to a confusion of theism and deism which has played havoc in the modern religious mind. Theism as we find it in the Bible attributes events which happen according to "natural law" to God's personal agency. Deism attributes events to "natural law" and not to God's personal agency. One may believe either way, but one cannot believe at once both ways. Empirically, there is no way of saying that an event occurs by nature and another through Divine agency. If evil occurs by nature, so also does good. If good occurs by Divine agency, it also occurs by nature. Evil comes upon us by wrong decision; good comes by right decision. If good

\*Published by the Council for Social Action as the December, 1944, issue of "Social Action." It is available at 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York.



comes by Divine volition, evil also comes by it. We believe that God does not purpose evil; but if we believe that God wills the good, it is not possible not to believe that God also wills evil. In fact, the Christian church has believed that evil comes from God either as punishment or as remedy for sins. Since evil actually operates in these ways, we cannot see how one can say that God does not will it. The writers do not believe God willed this war. Hence they shift from theism to deism, thus perpetuating a confusion which has paralyzed both the mind and the will of Christians in our time.

It is relatively easy to appeal to "natural and moral order," it is another thing to carry conviction with a critical mind. "Natural law" has recently come to prominence in social pronouncements and writings by clergymen. Catholics, Protestants and Jews are seeking a common ground against the actual and threatened evils of our day. And they seem to believe they have found it in "natural law," which means to them justice, humanity, cooperation, kindness, etc. It goes without saying that these principles are essential to common welfare today.

But does this fact make them "natural." Is "the natural" descriptive or normative? If descriptive, then self-love, emulation, the impulse toward power and autonomy, the love of security and comfort, also are natural and effective in their operation. If on the other hand "the natural" is what reason dictates, and normative, then it points to the ideal rather than to existence, and it is misnamed as natural. Besides, what was normative in an economy of scarcity is no longer obviously normative in our economy of abundance, e.g., thrift,

"hard work," and profiteering. Justice, for instance, is no longer so much giving each man his due on the basis of fixed standards as a distribution of technological production for the benefit of "the common man." The appeal to nature is no longer illuminating because traditional views of justice, humanity, cooperation tell us little about the conditions of common welfare today.

We no longer live in nature, or by nature, in quite the same way and to the extent of pre-industrial society. The writers of the pamphlet under discussion do not seem to be impressed by this fact. They still think primarily in terms of "God, man, and nature." They mention modern technology without giving evidence of any rigorous thought on its revolutionary effect upon the mind of the modern man. They argue as though contemporary man had not turned natural relations topsy-turvy through industrial and economic institutions which have to a large extent superseded "the natural relations" of property, supply and demand, competition, freedom, cooperation, justice, which are the stock in trade of antiquated ethics and economics. The truth is that we no longer live as dependents of nature; we have become its exploiters who must live in a set of man-made orders, or disorders. Until our theologians became sufficiently impressed with this fact, so as to think out its moral and religious implications, the present chasm between "devout observance" and the people's life cannot be bridged.

There is a rumor going around that "natural law," in the field of physical science, is a convention, useful but not of ultimate validity. On this we cannot speak with authority; we will content ourselves with a mere mention of it.



Thorstein Veblen has argued that "the natural law" of the hedonists and the utilitarians stated in terms of pleasure and pain, also, is far less illuminating than is commonly assumed. He thinks predation, envy, and emulation are more potent in our society than considerations of usefulness and pleasure. However, even more ambiguous than these is "moral order." It is of course true that wicked men and aggregations of men have often come to grief; but so have men and aggregations of men who have been moderately wicked. It is really hard to tell which have suffered sooner, oftener, and more calamitously. The "moral order" seems to act in a most immoral fashion. In any case, the situation is confused, and appeal to moral order as justice is not convincing. In this war, is it the wicked who have suffered most? Have the evil-doers who have been directly responsible for the present holocaust suffered more than the relatively innocent? Perhaps, our theologians mean that the moral order operates in the large and in long terms. This is of course somewhat consoling. But it does not make for joy when we consider the souls and societies which are crushed in the process. "Moral order" is not an unambiguous fact, and the appeals to it are next to futile in the present state of affairs. If our theologians have no better ground for hope to offer, they deserve the neglect they seem to enjoy.

If "natural law" is descriptive and not merely ideal, its operations in society are not transparent reflections of the activity of a good God. Our writers seem to know, from the workings of a moral order, that God is sovereign over the affairs of men. This is a delusion produced by lowering the Gospel ethic of love and raising social morality so that they ap-

pear as coincident. The activity of God, "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," is in fact buried under activities of men aimed at power, security and superiority, and the consequent horrors of this war. The actual moral order, the type of moral activity which dominates the life of society today, reveals not the justice of God but the non-justice of man enslaved to the power-machine. Unless one is prepared to say that the victory of the armed forces of the United Nations is obviously the triumph of justice as such, the hiddenness of God today is more and not less evident than in the days of the exilic Isaiah. Today one does not see God in the workings of moral order; one believes in God in spite of an immoral social order. The present order in society is disorder, and it hides rather than reveals a moral God. The common homiletical pretence of **knowing** that this war is the working out of moral order, or even a judgment of righteous God upon us, has proved unconvincing, because fitting the sufferings of persons, races, nationalities, to their several crimes is impossible. The contrary judgment is due to thoughtless abstraction which deceives only those who repeat it often enough to convince themselves of its truth. The love of God, the justice of God, the sovereignty of God, are things we believe in, and not things we know and can point to, saying, "lo here, lo there." That Jesus Christ was crucified "by wicked hands," we know. That God raised Him from the dead, thereby revealing His righteousness and power, we believe. There is no straight line from knowledge to faith in this matter. The conviction of the sovereignty of the Holy God is by faith. We do not know that the world is governed by a moral law revealing God in action. We see "in a glass darkly,"

and that by faith. Our faith is in God, and not in the moral disorder we live under. And our hope is in Him who raised Jesus from the dead, and not in the order which crucified Him.

Appeals to "natural law" and "moral order" are calculated to quicken men to prudence. The argument is: If you do not live justly together, you will perish together; if you live together as brothers, you shall have peace and prosperity together. But who has not heard these things? And who does not believe they are true? Surely, the difficulty cannot be that men do not know the necessity of justice for peace and security. Is it not rather that the impulse toward power is stronger than the love of justice? Men and nations break the law of justice because they esteem power more highly. They are not prone to prefer justice to power, so that their love of justice lags behind their desire for power, security, and superiority. The religious problem is not to believe in natural law but to mitigate the lust for power which is hardly amenable to qualification by prudential considerations.

In the complex maze of problems which confront us, the problem of power, as both external and internal, is conspicuous in importance and difficulty. Externally power creates a hundred problems of organization which defy the best of minds. Internally, it exaggerates geometrically the predatory impulse which overcomes all others. Power economics, power politics, power ethics, constitutes a triumvirate before which a religion of "natural law" and a general faith in a nirus towards goodness are not sufficiently effective. These latter do not have the power to mitigate the powers of war time, much less to transfigure them into benevolent creativity. Hence

there is a common doubting that the best works of men's minds and will at this time will be sufficient to prevent another dealer holocaust within a generation or two.

In our judgment, the problem of power demands the utmost serious consideration of the church today. It is the duty of our theologians to study patiently, profoundly, and extensively, the meanings of that power which sends up thousands of planes up in the air at once, floats ships on the sea by the ten thousands, makes for obliteration bombings, huge tank and gun battles, and the whole of diabolical "modern mechanical warfare." These things are not incidents in the modern world. They are the aspect of the operation of the powers which dominate the totality of human relations: the family, the school, the factory, the marketplace, the government, and even our churches. Everywhere, apart from concessions to irrelevant human ways, the power of modern industry, through the several related occupations such as finance, labor, and business, dominates the spirit of the modern man. It does so even where least apparent, as in the home and on the playground. The church itself, inspite of a semblance of transcendence, is deeply involved in this phenomenon. The power of industry is in the centre of our existence, so that we have not been able to objectify it sufficiently and to see it in its true proportions and pervasive operations. Compared to the uproar of social forces let loose by power-machines, the theologians' talk about "natural law" and nature's God is confused murmur. It will not be heard, much less heeded.

We need a radical reorientation of the Christian mind. Such a process will require the concerted efforts of our best



minds. We do not pretend to possess a blueprint for it. However, we make the following observations with the hope that they will lead others to fruitful reflection toward the theological revolution required by our situation and our need.

1. The locus of Divine revelation today is Jesus Christ in relation to contemporary social fact, especially industry and business. Our relation to the power-machine has largely supplanted our historic relation to nature. Traditional theology, whether orthodox, or liberal, or even neo-orthodox, has been preoccupied with man's relation to nature. Therefore such theology, reflected in the pamphlet before us, is not sufficiently illuminating.

2. The weightiest social realities of our time are man-made, and do not arise from historic forms of cooperation between man and nature. Hence we need to modify traditional statements of the problem of Divine and human activity. If man does what God does not, it is hard to see what God does. Divine and human activity cannot be juxtaposed without denying one or the other. Renewed reflection on this matter will throw considerable light upon the problem of God's relation to the war.

3. The Christian's task, in this time of war and decision for the destiny of peoples, can be stated with maximum clarity only if the unheard-of predominance of the impulse for power in our time is known and acknowledged in its true depth and pervasiveness. The present debate on pacifism is helpful to the Christian conscience, but it does not define the primary tasks of the church, and it gives little promise for an effective "ministry of reconciliation." Our real task is so to realize human bondage to power-machines that we may be delivered from it. It is to repent of a lust for

power which is our particular form of sin.

4. The perennial problems of Christian theology need fresh consideration in the light of our new situation. The doctrines of God and the creation, "human nature" and sin, the incarnation and the atonement, the Holy Spirit and salvation, need to be reexamined and restated with primary attention to Scripture in the light of the present social situation. Here is a task for theology today, and for all thinking Christians: a task which is inescapable and hardly begun.

Adequate theological work today demands theologians' utmost freedom from habitual modes of thought and a serious treatment of a revolutionary situation. Three centuries of "natural theology" will have to be radically revised in the full light of contemporary social reality. This is a very difficult task, but it has to be done. Otherwise the church will fail in its task of reconciliation.

On the other hand, we must listen to the word of God with a new attention, that is, with the attention of faith. We must allow this word to pluck and plant, to tear down and to build: Salvation is impossible without reason; we have to know our situation. It is by faith alone; for Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God which alone can transform our sinful power into the creative freedom of God's love.

There is much more to be said. We have passed over well deserved praise of the pamphlet under consideration. We have omitted further criticisms so as not to weary the reader. We have, let us hope, said enough to draw attention to a crucial issue which we trust our theologians will elucidate further. The future of our churches and of our peoples is at stake. Now is the time to think and act.

# THE PROBLEM OF THE PROTESTANT FAITH

By ROBERT ROY WRIGHT

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The problem which faces the average Protestant minister in his local Church may be stated quite simply: he is not dealing with Protestants at all, but with the end-products of a secularism and liberalism which have left in our Protestant Churches a vast group of people who have no notion as to what they are, or why they are, or what they ought to do. The process by which this has come about has been traced on many occasions and there is no need of following it further here.

The point to be emphasized now is rather that the typical Protestant is totally unaware that he is not a Protestant. Bourgeois liberalism has sapped his religious conviction, but he does not know it. The foundations upon which his life really rests have never been critically examined so that he is aware of their irreligious and non-Protestant implications. So far as he is concerned, he is a Protestant: he looks askance upon the priest of the local Roman Church, cannot "make any sense" out of the Roman service when the marriage of some friend or the death of a prominent person in the community requires his attendance, and is highly indignant when he hears that money must be paid before prayers are said on behalf of boys who are in the armed forces. For these reasons he calls himself a Protestant, whatever his own uncritical assumptions might prove to be if they were laid out upon the table before him.

Probably in all communities, and in varying proportions in different communities, the Protestant minister must deal with people who have maintained all the verbal symbolism of Protestantism. Or at least of American evangelism. In short, the fundamentalists. Yet even this group is not aware of the significance of the position which it holds. Religion in this instance has become hopelessly compartmentalized. And when it comes to dealing with life, the typical fundamentalist uses the same unexamined liberalism as his brother who has never been washed in the blood of the Lamb, nor experienced the second blessing. He may argue all night that Christ is coming upon the clouds of glory at any moment. But this does not mean that he has an eschatological view of history with which to approach the pressing problems of contemporary civilization. Rather, he regards the future of America in particular, and of the world in general, from the vantage point of an unshakable faith in progress.

It is for this reason that all schemes for a united Protestantism miss the point. Denominationalism undoubtedly has its evils; and all the cooperation which can be achieved, both at home and on the foreign field, is not to be despised. But to say that "if we only could have one Church," instead of the two Churches, or three or four, which often enough engage in disgraceful competition, is to misunderstand the basic prob-



lem which confronts the Protestant minister on the level of the local Church.

Protestantism has not simply disappeared as a social movement. Protestantism has disappeared altogether. And in its place has been left a large—and decreasing—number of people who attend Church out of force of habit, who still find that the organizations of the Protestant Church are often a means of obtaining status in the community and of enhancing their own sense of importance sheltered from too-ruthless a competition; and—let it be said—of people who find there a real, if distinctly limited, approach to the Divine.

This may be clearly seen in the understanding which the average Protestant has of the war. And here it becomes abundantly clear that the typical Protestant has become totally incapable of approaching even the most pressing of problems with the categories of his professed faith. Scarcely ever is there any attempt to judge it from the vantage-point of the moral perspective. And there is every likelihood that we will fall into a pathetic and dangerous kind of inverted racism: the belief that the forces which have disturbed life are peculiarly German in character (unless they are Japanese), and that once this element in life has been brought under control through any of several more or less desirable schemes, then life will go on its way untroubled. Closely coupled with this is a growing nationalism, so that the man who is most firmly convinced that the source of all evil is German, is also the man who declares most loudly that even when Germany has been dealt with severely, we will still need the dubious advantages of compulsory military training. Yet these two mutually-exclusive ideas rest undisturbed, side by side, in

the same man. Almost never is there any suggestion of the moral complexity of the problem before us. And the average Protestant is complacent, self-righteous, and optimistic about himself, his nation and his world, even though contemporary history has almost completely refuted the liberal articles of faith upon which such a view of life is founded.

This, then, is the fundamental problem which confronts the minister of the typical Protestant parish: that he is dealing with people who, whatever the words of their mouths may indicate, are unconscious liberals with no knowledge of the faith upon which their lives actually rest. The typical Protestant is a child of his culture rather than of his Church. And, above all, he does not know it.

## II.

In such a situation the task of the parish minister is primarily an evangelistic one. Somehow he must be able to shatter the unconscious liberalism which holds his parishoners in its grip, and bring them face to face with God. Reactionary as it may sound, and as far from the great problems of our age as it may seem to be, the first thing for which the minister must be concerned is the personal religious experience of those who have been placed in his care. Only then will he be relieved of the task of forever having to try to pump reality into their religious lives with countless numbers of "how to" sermons. Only then can he preach that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth," and know that God has indeed said it to the heart of the man in the pew before him.

It is interesting to speculate as to how far this task is circumscribed by the cultural forces of our era. But surely it is

plain that evangelism now must be understood in a far different sense than it is commonly understood in our Church life. This is not the day of the mass appeal and the sawdust trail. Reading again the sermons of John Wesley, one is constantly amazed at the fact that they could have "moved" anybody. And yet they did! So that it seems safe to say that ours is a different cultural climate and requires a different approach.

In other words, the present task of the Protestant minister is at least as much a function of his pastoral office as it is of his preaching office. And it seems likely that we must go even beyond Brunner's suggestion of intimate groups in his *Divine-Human Encounter*, and lay greater stress upon the individual pastoral call.

The pastoral call must be rescued from the curse of the social visit which it has so largely become. It may be that this is merely to push the problem back one step further. For surely it seems impossible to lay out a neat technique for crashing through the unconscious presuppositions of the average layman. Indeed, this is the point at which contemporary theology must do further exploring. It can call to the bar of Christian judgment all the faiths and beliefs of liberal culture, and puncture them brilliantly. But it cannot do it on a level which the "common man" can understand. It has not yet discovered the way to blast the soul of the man whose liberalism is covert rather than overt. And it has not yet uncovered any positive religious experience to put in the place of a blasted liberalism. So far, its approach has been that of the intellectual, completely beyond the comprehension of even the alert and intelligent layman.

But until the local minister can devise,

and have the help of his theological betters in devising, some means of piercing the unconscious liberalism of his parishoners (and how it shall be done when the logic of contemporary history cannot do it is precisely the problem) and of nurturing vital Christian faith in the intimacy of the pastoral call, he must resign himself to dealing with people who are on the books but not in the Church, who lack the time to do the work of the Church, who allow a multitude of social obligations to overshadow the needs of the Church, and who frankly—because of their excessive optimism and lack of moral earnestness—live perfectly satisfactory lives without the ministries of the Church and fail to see that it has any vital relevance to their lives at all.

This is not to belittle the preaching function of the minister in any way. The public proclamation and exposition of the Word of God is not to be eliminated, and ought to be carried forward with all the power and persuasiveness at a man's command. Rather is it a recognition of the fact that the nominal constituency of the local Protestant Church, as E. Stanley Jones has somewhere remarked, is the greatest field for evangelism in the world; and that the personal religious experience of the average Protestant is prior to any other. Until this problem of the unconscious lack of Protestantism on the part of Protestants is squarely met, all other approaches to the problem of Protestantism will be beside the point and of little avail. Interest may be increased through the organization of clubs and forums, and people may be brought into Church relationship through personal loyalty to some minister; but these things must be recognized for what they are, at least in the soul of the individual minister. Even the organization of lay



workers will not meet the problem at the outset, for they will have nothing but a superficial optimism which they can share. It is "surgery of the soul" that is needed now. And at the level of the local Protestant parish, there is no one but the minister who can perform it.

### III.

Along with this emphasis upon individual pastoral work (which has been a mentioning of the problem rather than its solution) there must go an equal emphasis on the Church. There is real need on the level of the Protestant parish Church for an attitude which is probably best described by the rather dubious phrase of "high Church."

Particularly is this needed in the light of the emphasis previously made. The vagaries of the Oxford Group Movement and similar organizations must serve as reminders that the purely individualistic approach, or even the use of Brunner's small "cells" is full of pitfalls and snares to be avoided at all costs. Nor need the charge of formalism be feared. For formalism is not necessarily connected alone with a "high" attitude, as anyone who has had experience with a Protestant prayer meeting can testify.

But even on its own merits, it seems likely that one of the things from which the local Protestant parish suffers is the lack of any "mysterious tremendum" associated with the Church. The colorful, the dramatic and the awesome are legitimate needs of the religious life, as has been increasingly emphasized by the liturgical movement which has grown in America in the last few decades. Until it may be fairly said that if on the one hand the typical Protestant has had his faith undermined by liberalism, on the other hand he has been starved as well

by the lack of beauty and drama in worship. No doubt many attempts at such a "high" attitude have been crude and clumsy and superficial. But this is to say that more attention needs to be paid to it, not that it is thereby condemned.

The severity with which the early Church was forced to deal with Montanism and Donatism should serve as ample warning that decency and order are as necessary in any vital Church life as the personal religious experience. Until that experience has been made to feel itself a part of the larger experience of which it is at once the cause and the result, it will remain the anarchic and divisive thing it has so often turned out to be.

### IV.

The other approach which needs to be made on the problem of the local Protestant Church is through the Church school. Modern religious education has been guilty of many sins. But directing attention to the Church school has not been one of them.

There is a purely administrative level on which this problem must be approached. The Church school must be made to feel that it is indeed the school of the Church, and not a separate end in itself. This aspect of the problem has been fully recognized, and need only be mentioned here.

Of a more fundamental nature is the problem of content of the Church school curriculum. And here again, before the local Church can hope to do much in a constructive way, there is need for further study on the part of contemporary theology. For the typical Protestant Church school has been undermined by liberalism, not only in the legitimate realm of method, but in the realm of content as well. A return to the stand-

ard use of a catechism is not desirable. But the Church school, and the writers of its literature, must become aware of the fact that they are dealing with boys and girls who are not Protestant in their outlook. And it must be understood that Protestantism has a set of presuppositions (no less than democracy, whether they be admitted, or erroneously assigned to the mysterious realm of "nature") and that these must in some way be transmitted to the oncoming generation of Protestants. This job becomes increasingly clear when the place of the parochial school in the Roman Church is frankly assessed. It would doubtless be impractical, if indeed it were desirable, to launch a program of "parochial" schools among the Protestant Church. But this should underline the urgent fact that the Protestant Church school must become more fully aware of the strategic place it has in any virile Protestantism. It would be foolish to ask that a child receive a theological education in the school of his Church. But it is not foolish to expect that he come to understand that being a Protestant is not synonymous with believing nothing in particular.

This again places a heavy burden upon the minister, for the lacks and shortcomings of the average teacher in the Protestant Church school cannot be overlooked. But the fundamental point of view must be developed that Protestant doctrine is not a weird and esoteric body of material totally divorced from every

area of vital living; but that it has resources for the understanding of life which the liberalism of the public schools and the unconscious liberalism of the man in the street is unable to supply.

Until this need has been frankly faced and overcome, Protestantism will not be the vigorous force in life that it ought to be.

## V.

These, then, are the real problems which face Protestantism at the level of the local Church: the personal religious experience of its members, the development of a "high" attitude toward the Church, and the conscious Protestantism of its Church school.

It seems fair to say that the second of these is the one for which there is most adequate help for the local minister. And contemporary theology still has a great deal of work to do before it can effectively help the local minister with the first and the third.

There are clearly many problems which confront the Protestant Church today: the social application of its teachings, Church unity, the vigorous declaration of its point of view on a national basis. But until Protestantism can deal with the three problems outlined, and deal with them on the level of the local parish, all its efforts toward dealing with these other problems will remain what they have been in the past: fragmentary, strictly on the level of the national offices, and completely lacking in vitality.



# CHRISTIAN FAITH AND THE RACE PROBLEM

By REINHOLD NIEBUHR

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In a "Primer on Race" issued by the "Council on Christian Social Progress of the Northern Baptist Convention" some very interesting facts are presented on the historic elaboration of the races of mankind, leading to the conclusion that "there is now no pure races." Also brief historic evidence is presented to show that races do not have inherent characteristics. We are told for instance that "The Scandinavians now known as the world's most cooperative people were once, as Vikings, the terror of coastal towns." Differences between races are the product of history and social circumstances and there is no evidence to support the idea that there are inferior and superior races. "Science concludes," the pamphlet declares, "that there is no good evidence of inborn mental differences between races."

All this marshalling of scientific evidence for the essential equality of the races is perfectly good propaganda for the Christian idea of racial brotherhood. Yet there is something faulty with this scientific treatment of the race issue from the Christian standpoint. Most of our modern anthropologists assume that race bigots are ignorant of the facts of life; and that they have been confused by certain superficial differences in racial traits to assume the inferiority of the minority group. They will therefore spread propaganda to acquaint men with the latest results of scientific research. They would dispel race prejudice by in-

creasing scientific enlightenment.

Since all forms of prejudice do feed on stupidity and since a certain amount of emancipation from bigotry can be, and has been, effected by social enlightenment there is no reason why the Christian church should discourage such scientific propaganda. But it is unfortunate for the church to content itself with this scientific assurance that "there are no races" or that "there are no inferior races." This is not sufficient because it does not measure the tragedy of racial bigotry deeply enough. Racial bigotry like every other form of human pride and sin is something more than ignorance and something less than malice; though the malice of actual sin may grow out of the predispositions of pride and contempt which lie at the foundation of racial bigotry.

It is of no avail to prove that there are no pure races when actual bigotry expresses itself in history whenever a cultural, religious, ethnic or other group diverges from the type of the majority which presumes to set the standards by which the others are judged. While there are no absolute ethnic bases for cultural distinctions there are provisional ethnic and cultural affinities. The Irish are usually Catholic; and if the Anglo-Saxon group of some community holds them in contempt it may justify its contempt on both ethnic and religious grounds. The power of bigotry is always greatest if the group held in contempt diverges

from type, both ethnically and culturally. This, for instance, is the primary problem in anti-Semitism. Though many Jews desire to be known merely as a religious and not as an ethnic group, it is nevertheless possible to identify many Jews ethnically. Also many of them are really concerned to be preserved as an ethnic group. But they also have their own unique culture, as well as their own ethnic characteristics; and they affront the majority by the combination of this ethnic and religious divergence. The contempt, hatred, and fear which confronts the Jew may be slightly alleviated by scientific enlightenment. But it is more important to know why the Gentile majority is inclined to accept false statements about the Jew than to refute particular false statements. The predisposition to think ill of a divergent group is a dark and terrible abyss of evil in the soul of man. If it is robbed of implausible rationalizations it is quite capable of inventing more plausible ones.

Nor is it true that the sense of superiority of race rests primarily upon faulty premises which can be dispelled by scientific enlightenment. Very frequently the accusation of inferiority is actually a betrayal of insecurity in the face of the competition of the minority group. The Japanese were frequently hated on the west coast because they are incredibly efficient truck gardeners; and white competitors veiled their envy and fear by various accusations. In the same way the intelligence of Jews in the competition of many colleges is feared; and the fear prompts accusations that the Jewish students are too clannish, or too pushing, or too indifferent to athletics or whatnot. The accusations may be plausible or implausible. They are sometimes plausible because minority groups may

have special characteristics, derived from the defensive position in which they find themselves as minority groups. But the accusations may be prompted more by the fear of competitive superiority than by any real conviction of their inferiority.

Even when we consider the relation of the white man to the negro the depth of the predisposition from which bigotry is derived becomes apparent. The negro people of this country were once slaves and they are still subject to many forms of disinheritance. For this reason they are still "inferior" in many capacities and skills which they have not been allowed to acquire. This inferiority supposedly justifies the attitude of contempt of the majority in the eyes of those who exhibit the contempt. But even here the racial bigots give themselves away. When they are confronted by evidences of the negro's superior gifts, as in the field of the arts, more particularly in music, they are filled with rage. Furthermore they betray a fear of the negro's competition even while they pretend to despise his competitive competence. Most arguments against equal education for negroes, for instance, are curiously inconsistent. It is claimed on the one hand that the negro could not profit by these educational advantages; and on the other hand it is claimed that if he had equal educational advantages nothing would avail to keep him "in his place." Thus the majority group betrays its fears as well as its arrogance and proves that hatred and contempt of the minority group is compounded of both insecurity and a false security. It is the false security of a particular kind of man (Gentile or white man or whatnot) who imagines himself the ultimate man and judges those who do not conform to his standard of beauty, culture, physiognomy, dil-



igence, laziness, or any other characteristic which he ascribes to himself, for falling short of the ultimate of which he is the exemplar. But there is a certain insecurity here also. This ultimate man has a darkly conscious sense of the fact that he is not as ultimate as he pretends; and that the groups which he pretends to hold in contempt might actually beat him at his own game if he relaxed the restraints which he has placed upon them.

Psychological science might make some contribution to the analysis of these sub-rational fears and hatreds. It has in fact already done so. Yet it is also inhibited from a full analysis of these complexities because it does not know the human spirit in the full stature of its freedom. Psychology is not as simple rationalistic as the anthropology in dealing with race prejudice. Yet it is always looking for the specific roots of man's insecurity and sense of inferiority. It does not know to what degree the particular forms of pride and arrogance in man are prompted by a general predisposition to pride and arrogance; and how this general predisposition is man's abortive effort to hide his general insecurity. Race bigotry is, in short, one form of original sin. Original sin is something darker and more terrible than mere stupidity and is therefore not eradicated by enlightenment alone; though frequently enlightenment can break some of its power by robbing it of some of its instruments of stupidity. While the general predisposition is not malice, it does issue in specific attitudes which have malice in them. We do not finally come to terms with race pride until the soul knows itself to be under final judgment, ceases to veil its hidden fears and prides, honestly prays: "Search me O God and

know my faults, try me and know my thoughts,—see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me to the way everlasting." Race bigotry, in other words, must be broken by repentance and not merely by enlightenment.

It can not be said that religious repentance has done much to soften the power of prejudice. Scientific enlightenment, despite its weaknesses has actually done more to dispel race prejudice than most religion. There are many reasons for this. The liberal church merely preaches ethnic good will. It is too simply moralistic to come to terms with the hidden power of sin in the lives of men. It preaches the law of Christ and insists that "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek." But it preaches this as a law which all men ought to obey. When confronted with the overt and covert defiance of that law it is overcome with a sense of futility.

The orthodox church on the other hand, particularly in the south, never allows the Gospel of Christ to become a cleansing force in the whole life of man. It has a simple little legalistic system of Christian morality and tries to convict men of sin because they have violated this system. It deals with sins, mostly picayune sins, and not with sin. Actually its Christian legalism with its strong emphasis upon Sabbath observance and upon a scrupulous sex ethic and its complete disregard of the hopes, fears, ambitions and desires of men which create social, racial and economic forces in society, is probably a partly conscious evasion of the moral problem involved in the race issue. The very hysteria of southern evangelical legalism proves that something is being covered up. This Pharisee would not pray quite so obviously, thanking God that he is not like

other men, if he did not have an uneasy conscience.

Let the church, in dealing with the race issue avail itself of every measure of enlightenment which modern science, anthropological and psychological, can contribute to the issue. But let it not forget its own resources, or rather the resources of its Gospel. The church knows, or ought to know, that though men may be incredibly stupid, the hatred and contempt which they exhibit in their lives springs from a deeper source than stupidity. It is the consequence of the corruption of a greater spiritual freedom in man than those understand who speak of man as "Rational." Both the dignity and the misery of man are greater than modern culture understands. The misery of man is derived from his idolatry, from his partly conscious and partly unconscious effort to make himself, his

race and his culture God. This idolatry is not broken until man is confronted with the real God; and finds his pride broken by the divine judgment; and learns that from this crucifixion of the old proud self, a new self may arise and that this new self has the "fruits of the spirit" which are "love, joy and peace."

Racial conflict has become the most vicious of all forms of social conflict in this nation. And the racial tensions will become worse long before they will become better. The church has been very busy telling the nation what to do about this. The church might better try to present the national community with a greater number of truly contrite souls, truly "emancipated" of race prejudice who express their emancipation partly in the contrite recognition of the remnant of pride which remains in the souls of even the emancipated.





# SCIENTIFIC MENTALITY AND THE GENESIS STORIES

By CLIFFORD L. STANLEY

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One of the characteristic elements in the modern mind is the scientific outlook. For this reason certain kinds of credulity are less possible to our contemporaries than to our antecedents. Modern man has a keener nose for what has actually happened. He knows that Washington did not chop down the cherry tree with his little hatchet. Instead, the tree, the hatchet and no small part of Washington's reputation for veracity came from the very unveracious Parson Weems. This is the age of debunking the too good and of whitewashing the too bad. On the one hand, a volume shows the financial gains of some of the architects of America and the Founding Fathers become the "Funding Fathers." On the other hand, we have read books showing that Caesar Borgia and Benedict Arnold had good points too. Scientific history is very much a mark of this period. We sift the chronicles of peoples to find the irreducible core of real events and persons. We apply this to our own time, as in the case of Professor Fay's and Harry Elmer Barnes' researches into the origins of the World War.

The same realism marks our attitude toward places and realities. We do not mistake our imaginings for reality. Mount Olympus is like any other mountain on top and there are no isles of the blest. There are no sea monsters or Rhine maidens. There is one real world, connected in all its parts; and experience is the sole door to it. We have turned

our back on many colorful and exciting possibilities. Our world is sober but solid.

Let us apply this modern mentality to several classical elements in Biblical theology, namely, the Garden of Eden and the Fall of man. The modern temper would say, and rightly, that there was no actual, literal Garden of Eden anywhere, understood in the sense of Yellowstone National Park, for instance. It would deny, and rightly, that there was an actual, literal Fall, understood in the sense of, say, the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Does this mean, then, that we must reject these things out of hand? From the beginning of Christianity up to the Reformation they formed the background of the Gospel. We ought to go slowly when such departures as this are in question.

Instead of throwing great chunks of the past into the discard let us see if we can salvage some of it. Let us begin with man, busy with his life in this world. Man is not content simply to live. For some reason he asks questions as well—what am I, what did I come from, what is my destiny? From this it can be seen that the temporal is not sufficient by itself but drives man beyond himself to the eternal. The finite is not self-explanatory but requires the infinite for its explanation.

In the second place, it is not man in general who asks these questions, it is always some particular man. Where did

red men come from, asks the Indian, and the black man inquires the origin of black men. The Greek wants to know where Greeks came from and the Hindu asks for the origin of the Aryan. The question is always concrete and reflects the nature of the questioner. The answer is always similarly conditioned by the mentality of the questioner.

All men ask these questions. Every people has its mythology, as we call it. This prompts the epigram that, the other man's theology is "mythology," whereas my "mythology" is "theology." Conceivably every individual might have his own mythology but characteristically a mythology is a social achievement. Thus the bond between men is nothing less than their common business with eternity. The Church is the company of those who interpret eternity through Jesus Christ and the bond which unites them in this weighty undertaking is the "Communion and Fellowship of the Holy Spirit."

We can bring this discussion down to the case in point by saying that the Genesis stories are basically the Semitic myths. Not only did they belong to the group that was Israel but also to the wider ethnic group to which Israel belonged. But it is not enough to say this. In the form that we have them the myths have been revised in the light of the insights of the Prophets of Israel. This can be seen by a comparison of the Genesis stories with the Babylonian myths on the one hand and with the teaching of the Prophets on the other.

Now we can bring together our two concerns, the scientific mentality and the questionings of men. The scientific mentality is present among us and is a gain. We must make terms with it by refusing to assert the existence of events

(the Fall) and place (the Garden of Eden) that we have not directly experienced. On the other hand the questioning of man is here to stay also and the concrete form of that questioning. To this there must be an answer. For the sake of understanding we may tell a tale naming persons (Adam and Eve) and places (Garden of Eden). If we understand ourselves we know that we are not dealing with realities. Rather we are using reality to assist in understanding the eternal meaning of reality. The story is eternally true and temporally a fiction.

With this in mind there is abiding value in the stories of Genesis. Man believes that his life has infinite value and that there is such a unity in the world—within himself, and between himself and the objective world—that life for him is possible. That is, he believes "in one God, Creator of Heaven and earth." The Genesis story says the same thing in concrete, pictorial form. Man believes also that his life is spoiled, not in detail but in principle; the widespread ills of life are not simply on the level of event but reflect a sickness in the "heart." Where is this from? It cannot be from God or else man was made evil and God is evil, which is unthinkable. So in order to do justice to man's present situation and to preserve the goodness of his origin we are forced to insert two factors. First, we assert that man is good essentially. That is, he was made good. In temporal terms we may, in order to assist understanding, tell of a period (the age of innocence) and a place (the Garden of Eden) when this was true. Second, we assert that the evil of man comes from his will and not from his nature. He, himself, is responsible for it and can not blame it on his Maker. So between the



good beginning and the questionable present we insert this evil act which accounts for the evil we now find. In temporal terms, it becomes a great and memorable exercise of defiance (the Fall). The Fall never happened on land or sea as an actual event yet an evil actuality everywhere stands between us and our essential goodness.

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We may conclude by saying that the Genesis stories are not "real" events and that we may use them only if we understand them for what they are. On the other hand we must cling to the underlying truth expressed in them until we are convinced that it no longer describes our existence.

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## AGRA AND PLYMOUTH

### A CONTRAST IN CONTEMPORARIES

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By RUTH A. and FRANK P. MANLY

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It was in the grey dawn, that hour when all the world looks grey, that we first saw the Taj Mahal. We had spent two days and two nights on the railway in a crowded third class compartment. When our party stumbled out onto the platform at Agra we were weary, dirty, and dishevelled. But to have arrived at Agra was something, Agra, rivaled for romance only by Bagdad, while Haroun Al Rashid with his half-mythical splendors is quite overshadowed by the more historical glories of Shah Jahan. We took taxis and hurried, just as we were, to see the Taj at sunrise. As we approached we had a distant view of the dome, cloudlike against a pale sky. Then our cars drew up before the great gate of red sandstone through which access is gained to the garden by which the Taj is surrounded. The high walls were dark and forbidding and the huge iron-studded doors were still shut. But our taxi driver beat upon the doors and shouted words which proved an **open sesame**. A small wicket opened. We stepped through under a vaulted arch of

unguessed height in whose shadow night lingered and there before us, framed in the arch, shining softly in the increasing light, was the Taj Mahal.

Was it real or just a more perfect picture like the many long familiar to memory? So perfect are the proportions of the central dome and flanking minarets when seen down the long perspective of reflecting pools and lines of cypress trees that all sense of dimension was lost. We saw it not as large or small but as a gem of perfect art, unencumbered by measurements. In the early morning when no people were about there was nothing to divert the mind from proportion to mere dimension. Only as we slowly approached across the wide garden was the almost pained appreciation of exquisite, balanced art expanded into awed realization of vast size. The marble platform on which the Taj Mahal stands is itself a large structure twenty-two feet high and three hundred and thirteen feet square. Each of the four minarets would alone be a noble monument, a splendid

marble tower one hundred thirty-seven feet tall. But platform and minarets are but a setting for the tomb itself and this cannot be described here. Suffice to say that as we saw it from the summit of a minaret, glowing in the early sunlight, we experienced a sense of refreshment and renewal. We were feeling the influence of exquisite art magnificently harmonized with a lofty ideal. The discomforts of the flesh vanished in an atmosphere of calm and elevated thought.

"Sacred to the memory of an undying love"—this, in the language of a travel book read long ago, is the meaning of the Taj Mahal. It is good to remember that a man reared this great structure not for personal glory or to celebrate victory in war. Nor does it set forth a romantic sentiment merely but commemorates the life companionship of a wife who had borne him fourteen children and had been, withal, his friend and wise adviser in the difficult statesmanship of empire. Yet as we saw the other works of Shah Jahan disillusionment was painful. He loved and honoured one great woman but what of the nameless host of others shut up in the harems of Agra and Delhi? While the Taj Mahal was being erected to the honour of Mumtaz, marble palaces were being built elsewhere to the shame of hundreds of women to whose human rights and dignities no thought was given. We were shown in the fort of Agra, where the spacious harem quarters of Jahangir were scorned by Shah Jahan, who built alongside greater palaces, more spacious gardens for women quartered there like domesticated animals, albeit in marble stalls.

Then again as we viewed these splendid buildings we were forced to remember that this was no Arabian night's dream. These domes and towers were

not the swift creation of genii obeying him who, perchance, rubbed the magic lamp. What indeed of the forgotten host who toiled in the building? There were twenty thousand men who laboured for twenty-two years to create the Taj Mahal. We do not know whether this number includes the army who toiled in the distant marble quarries of Jaipar or that sweated and died along the hundred miles of sunsmitten road over which the white blocks were dragged. Lifted, shaped and fitted, the marble has become a bubble that floats in the sky like a cloud. But it was cruelly heavy to the hands that lifted it there. These thoughts were multiplied as we saw stupendous fortifications and were wearied in soul by miles of battlemented walls. What again of the peasant millions from the mouths of whose children was snatched the bread which, in the heat of human misery, was metamorphosed into fairy palaces? Shah Jahan was capable of high sentiment and generous feeling but the form of its expression shows that it was after all a quintessence of selfishness.

And what of New Delhi? After seeing the magnificent workmanship of the emperors who created Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Old Delhi we feared an unpleasant contrast. Little can be said here more than that our fears were unrealized. At the time of the Delhi Darbar in 1911, His Majesty the King Emperor, George V said: "It is my desire that the planning and designing of the public buildings to be erected be considered with the greatest deliberation and care that the new creation may be in every way worthy of this ancient and beautiful city." This wish has been more than fulfilled. The public buildings of India's capital city are worthy of the vision that prompted them, that they shall be the centre from



which a united India shall govern itself as a dominion within the British Empire. This later empire dwarfs that of Akbar and Shah Jahan even more in the grandeur of its basic ideas than in the vastness of its area. The Parliamentary building contains no hall of public or private audience for any potentate. Instead there are noble halls where men shall assemble for consultation with one another to rear and maintain an empire "broad based upon the people's will."

Granted that realization of this full ideal is still distant, here is the seed-thought well grown toward flower and fruit. This is the idea embodied in New Delhi, an idea no glimmering of which was reflected from the shining marble of the older capitals. If, indeed, India is yet consolidated into a firm confederacy it will be an achievement preparatory for the day when "the battle flags are furled in the parliament of man, the confederation of the world." With all the wrongs and errors which may be charged to British rule in India it must not be forgotten that here was conceived a dream of human unity such as no one ever thought of elsewhere. If it succeeds it will be an everlasting glory. If it fails it shall nevertheless be remembered and brought to realization by a maturer generation. Old Delhi is of the sunset and of a day that has gone. New Delhi is the morning of a day that may be stormy but whose sun shall never set, a day whose ideal is that men shall rule themselves in the dignity of self-control and govern each other with justice.

"Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate," and here thought reverts to Shah Jahan, that the Taj Mahal is a symbol of the contrasts in human nature. Seen from a modern point of view we find him without conscience, cruel, licentious. But

as the lotus blooms out of potentialities hidden in mud so the Taj Mahal blossomed out of unguessed depths in his character. There was an ideal of love and loyalty; there were boldness of vision, courage of execution, and creative imagination revealed in his empire as well as in his buildings. Shah Jahan, as a person, came as near to absolute freedom as can well be imagined. Gifted with intellectual genius of a very high order he could move in any direction and to any extent to which a flaming imagination impelled him. The barriers of moral scruple did not exist for him. Ethical considerations were tenuous. Spontaneous impulse was his law. As for power he had at his disposal to be expended upon his whims the fabulous resources of empire. Public opinion, now so potent a force, meant little to him. He was Aladdin with the wonderful lamp. His lightest wish was swiftly clothed with reality whether in human flesh or everlasting stone. In this freedom we can find a clue to his character and read a parable for our own time. Looking back at the sum total of that which was Shah Jahan what do we see in the perspective of time shadowed back from the reflecting pool of history? In this sum total what predominates? Beauty of beastiality? Self-expressing liberty or boundless licence? Mercy or cruelty?

The answer is confused. But looking at the Taj Mahal from the Jasmine Tower across the bend of the Jumna River we would like to believe and cherish the highest in him as the promise in humanity. For Shah Jahan is a type of humanity in the large. We, in our time, are not individually free. We are limited both by scruples and by resources. But collectively, organized as nations, we are like Shah Jahan. Scruples vanish. Re-

sources are boundless. Nations are imperial personalities. Looking at their works we find them rearing dream palaces of art, science and altruism. Looking closer we find their citizens crushed by taxation for warlike purposes. In the dark background of modern society we find genius and imagination plotting, planning and carrying into execution schemes of bestial violence which make Shah Jahan by contrast seem a self-indulgent child. Looking at our generation in the large it is hard to say whether history shall judge it by its domes and aspiring minarets or by its cruelty and neglect of social justice. We must believe, however, that present tendencies will be more clearly seen in fruit not yet visible and shall be found to contain the promise of higher things to come.

The key to all that made Agra and Old Delhi was a form of untrammelled self-expression that melted down into self-indulgence. The old emperors in that mood built with lavishness, splendor and with solidity that seem to imply a sense of permanence. But the stuff of permanence was not there. Permanence is not embodied in granite and marble; it is crystalized in ideas, ideals, dreams. The ideas of the emperors were rubble and shoddy. The social structure which they reared was built on quicksand and slime and was doomed to be engulfed speedily. Their palaces endure a little while as artistic antiques without a shadow of utility. In the days of their building the sun looked down upon a strange contrast. As the earth turned there came beneath the solar scrutiny the bleak shores of new England. Simultaneously with all that was the Agra and Delhi of Jehangir and Shah Jahan the Puritans were creating a new social order in Plymouth and Bos-

ton. Day by day Puritan New England with its simple homes, plain meeting houses and fundamental democracy alternated in the sun's light with the splendour and the squalor of imperial Agra and Delhi. Is a greater outward contrast imaginable. But the real contrast was inward, one of ideas. New England meant self-control, a self-limitation in the individual which gave to every member of the community the maximum self-expression consistent with the idea that everyone should in reasonable degree have the same privilege.

The contrast between Agra and Plymouth was in their underlying ideas. The philosophy of New England was no quicksand. It was of granite firmness. It was built largely into the foundations of the American nation and was the source of much of its strength. Long since has the ruin been realized which was implicit in the theory of Shah Jahan. It is of poignant interest that, at this late date, those same theories of self-expression indistinguishable from self-indulgence are spreading among the American people. The Puritan ideals have borne fruit in modern movements of idealism in education, art and science. But again out of the past comes the warning. Permanence is in the dreams which they embody. The American nation, and the same is true of any nation, is as strong and enduring as its essential philosophy. Self-expression let us indeed have, not fulfilled in self-indulgence but in self-control. Then shall appear that which has not yet been seen on earth, a social structure, yes, a nation which will outlast its architectural monuments and, when these crumble, will live to build its visions into yet nobler temples of the soul.



# BOOK REVIEWS

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**A PREFACE TO BIBLE STUDY**, by Alan Richardson; Westminster Press pp 128; \$1.00.

**THE PRECIPITANT OF MODERN MAN**, by D. Elton Trueblood, Harpers, pp 105; \$1.00.

Written in quite different fields as their titles indicate, both these books speak to the modern situation. In a way they supplement each other. Dr. Trueblood forcefully asserts that our predicament is secularism or a "vague religiosity," and Canon Richardson offers a thrilling method of using the Bible to restore religious vitality. I cannot recommend either of them, or both, too highly.

As the publishers of "A Preface to Bible Study" states in their foreword, "This is a recent British book, brought out in the United States because nothing like it is readily available to us at present." Certainly I have never read anything remotely like it. It is utterly unique. The title, although accurate, is not very enticing, and I picked the book up with some reluctance, but once begun it was almost impossible to put it down. Canon Richardson, formerly Study Secretary of the British S. C. M., combines the best Biblical scholarship with a profound and persuasive conviction that the Bible is the Word of God and that in the Bible—the whole Bible—as in no other place, we can and must hear God speaking to us.

The Bible is the final authority for Protestants, but one of the sadder facts of modern Protestantism is that the Bible is largely an unread book. Partly as a result of Biblical Criticism, the average

church member in our liberal churches looks upon the Bible as an ancient piece of literature and, except for certain of the ethical passages in the Gospels, of little value—certainly not as God speaking to him. Canon Richardson writes for these people and offers a simple but provocative method of restoring the Bible to its proper place at the center of our lives.

It would be unjust to the author and his book to try to quote excerpts or reproduce a digest. Every chapter is provocative and every page sings. I can only testify that although I have been reading, studying, and teaching the Bible for a number of years "A Preface to Bible Study" opened up whole new avenues that I had never dreamed of.

Dr. Trueblood's book, "The Predicament of Modern Man" says nothing that the readers of this journal will find new, but he writes with an unusual combination of profundity and clarity, particularly in the analytical chapters which constitute four-fifths of the book. Like a number of books in recent years Dr. Trueblood analyzes and reveals the total inadequacy of modern secular culture, and convincingly offers a revitalized Christianity as the only solution. The virtue of this book is not in its newness but rather in the remarkably clear and persuasive presentation Dr. Trueblood has crammed into scarcely more than one hundred pages. Anybody can easily read this book and everybody ought to.

Readers of "Christianity and Society" will find the author's first four chapters "The Sickness of Civilization," "The Failure of Power Culture," "The Impos-

tence of Ethics," and "The Insufficiency of Individual Religion" valuable and full of penetrating insights. But for the purposes of this review the last chapter, "The Necessity of a Redemptive Society" is the most interesting. Dr. Trueblood says that "our central need is for a contemporary redemptive society" (p. 93). Although Dr. Trueblood earlier gave a powerful justification for the Church, even a weak Church, he now argues that because our churches have so many wishy-washy members and "because Christianity has long ceased to be scrupulous in its membership" (p. 91), there must be some new redemptive society. "This society may be as different from the conventional churches of today as an airplane is from a buggy" (p. 97).

It must be a self-conscious fellowship and (deliberately borrowing from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*) Dr. Trueblood argues for a sharp distinction between "supporters" and "Members, the relatively few, who can count on one another in every eventuality, and who constitute the striking power" (p. 94). His redemptive society would include not only those who are already in the churches but also those sincere religious souls who are outside any recognized church.

Dr. Trueblood's last chapter is both moving and somewhat disappointing. It is moving because many of us have felt the need for some more incisive movement and have wished for such a fellowship. It is disappointing because after arguing so persuasively for such a redemptive society, and after giving some general rules regarding membership he leaves the matter rather hanging in the air. Just when Dr. Trueblood has brought us to the place where the reader is enthusiastically assenting that this is what needs to be done, he says that it is

not his purpose to tell how it is to be done. One suspects that this is because the author is as baffled as the rest of us by the problem of getting from paper theory to practical action. For instance Dr. Trueblood leaves ambiguous the relationship between the new redemptive society and the on-going Church which he so ably defended in an earlier chapter. These minor defects should not, however, blind us to the very real service Dr. Trueblood has rendered, particularly in the major analytical sections of the book. He has written an unusually valuable little book which does not require philosophical or theological training to read with great profit.

W. Burnet Easton, Jr.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Archibald M. Hunter. The Westminster Press, 1944, 122 pp. one dollar.

This small book is significant, not only for its content, but also because it is a sign of promise in the realm of New Testament scholarship. A critical approach to the literature of the New Testament combined with theological insight has long been needed. This book with several others that have appeared is beginning to fill that need. It is also salutary to discover an author who possesses the rare gift of combining scholarship with semi-popular exposition without sacrificing the one to the other. Dr. Hunter, Professor of New Testament and Greek Exegesis at Mansfield College, Oxford, is such an author.

The main contention of the book is that transcending the elements of diversity in the thought of the New Testament is a basic unity expressing itself in the proclamation of one Gospel. While



granting the values of the various analytical approaches to the New Testament, Prof. Hunter is conscious of the need for a vital re-affirmation of the unity of the New Testament message. He discovers that basic unity in the 'story of salvation' (Heilsgeschichte) which he sees is the dominant theme running throughout the Synoptics; Acts: the Pauline Epistles (excepting the Pastorals); First Peter; Hebrews, and the Gospel and First Epistle of John.

This dominant theme is subdivided into three sections. The first section takes up the 'kerygma,' the proclamation of an event which in turn implies a Christology which can be summed up in the words, "Jesus is Lord." The second section shows that both explicitly and implicitly Jesus undertook the task of creating a new 'people of God' (the ecclesia). The final section deals with soteriology, showing that Jesus and Paul were essentially at one in their view of man's condition of sinfulness before God and the need of redemption. Prof. Hunter also finds a substantial agreement between the New Testament writers in their approaches to the Atonement.

Such a book by its limitation of outline obviously raises many questions of a critical nature. Especially is this evident in the consideration of the Johanne literature. However within its scope it is an excellent book, presenting the central message of the New Testament "concerning that Person whose is 'the only name under heaven whereby we must be saved'."

G. R. Wheatcroft.

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WHAT THE NEGRO WANTS,  
edited by Rayford W. Logan. University of North Carolina Press, Cha-

pel Hill. 1944. \$3.50.

Negrophobes are much in the habit of insisting to the defenders of the rights of our darker citizens that "the negro really doesn't want what you claim for him. He is perfectly satisfied to 'stay in his place'." Even when outstanding negro leaders write of the desires of their fellows the answer comes back that this is just what a few cultural ones want: the mass of negroes is perfectly satisfied with their situation. Those who are not, simply are trying to make trouble. Thus does the negro find himself in impasse when he speaks for even minimal justice to a prejudiced citizenry.

Nevertheless, that word must be spoken. Let the negro come to his own defense, for it is not enough that the white liberals struggle for the rights of these oppressed people. This was surely the thought of Dr. Rayford W. Logan when he collected the essays which comprise this book. Here we find defensive writing issuing from the pens of the most outstanding negro leaders in America. These include Mary McLeod Bethune, formerly president of Methune-Cookman College, now president of the National Council of Negro Women; W. E. Burghardt DuBois, professor of Sociology at Atlanta University; Frederick D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute; A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; George Schuyler, associate editor of the *Pittsburg Courier* and of *The African* and business manager of *The Crisis*; and a number of other outstanding leaders of the colored people in America.

There is absolutely no mincing of words in any one of these essays. They are all perfectly agreed that America must begin to take its form of government ser-

iously or there will be serious trouble. Each makes a serious plea for consistency: either change the constitution or enforce it. This, it would appear, is just a plea for minimal justice, but everyone who will even so much as squint, at our contemporary scene knows that minimal justice is not given this large segment of our American people. They deserve the right to live as human beings: to have opportunities for equal education; to be allowed membership in any labor union; to move from place to place freely and without constant fear of insult and injury. This is what they want. And the impression is given in this book that this is what they are going to get very shortly now, or perish in the attempt.

For the most part the writers steer a quite even keel between the two extremes of solution. They are not generally revolutionary, nor are they going to be quietistic and wait for the whites to get around to being "nice." There is a strong and certain feeling that they know their power, the power of 13,000,000 people of one purpose; they know what they want; and they intend to have what they want.

One unfortunate aspect of the thinking of these writers lies in the fact that they do not understand fully the dynamic complexity of the issues. Each of them seems sure that there is "solution." Perhaps there is no such thing as permanent and complete solution in this complex business of the relationship of different races.

Yet it is entirely fitting that these depressed people would be able so powerfully to present their cause. The book should be read by anyone who really wants to understand the desires of the negro people.

Adolph Behrenberg.

**FREEDOM AND CIVILIZATION,**  
by Bronislaw Malinowski. Roy Publishers, \$3.50.

A great many thinkers have recognized that the present war presents a fundamental threat to modern culture, in the sense that what are known as freedom and democracy are in danger of destruction in the course of the conflict. Prof. Bronislaw Malinowski, late chairman of the department of Anthropology at Yale, shares this opinion, but adds an understanding of the meaning of culture and freedom in such a way as to show something of the profound nature of the threat.

On the basis of a frankly instrumentalist philosophy, Dr. Malinowski, has attempted to analyze the meaning and function of freedom in civilization. "Freedom can be defined," he says, "as the conditions necessary and sufficient for the formation of a purpose, its translation into effective action through organized cultural instrumentalities, and the full enjoyment of the results of such activity." He challenges vigorously what he calls, "free-floating freedom," or freedom as an abstract entity which can be isolated from human social activity, and this challenge is one of the most valuable parts of the book.

In the light of his definition, collective violence is the greatest menace to freedom, because it arbitrarily limits choice of purpose for both aggressors (the rank and file) and their victims, because it destroys the cultural institutions which are the setting for all activity, and because participation in the results is limited, particularly for the victims. The result of modern war is slavery—both for the aggressors who have to be regimented in order to prepare for it, and for those who are the victims of aggression.



The basic purpose of the present war, according to the author, is to defeat totalitarianism, because such an organization of society represents the triumph of one institution, the state, over the many which comprise culture, and consequently the whole culture is perverted in the direction of collective violence. The defeat of the Nazis, he recognizes, will not be enough to eliminate war as a cultural instrumentality. Only the creation of a world super-state, justified by the fact that the world is already developing a common culture, will guarantee the preservation of freedom.

What the author means by culture is the setting in which a number of diverse social institutions may co-operate with each maintaining a relative autonomy, and with the individual permitted to select the institutions in which he will participate. Freedom is only found in the life of a cultural institution—the family, the manufacturing enterprise, the educational institution, the church, etc. The individual cannot find freedom by himself, but only through participating in the life of such institutions as make possible his realization of definite goals. The institutional setting does indeed limit his scope but on the other hand it provides him with the means for attaining his goals. To the extent that the institution does not coerce the individual into membership, nor in the selection of his goal, nor in the means to attain it, nor in the enjoyment of the rewards, beyond what is necessary to prevent his activity from inhibiting the activity of others and beyond what is necessary to avoid interference with the legitimate activity of other institutions, to that extent it is an agency of freedom.

What the author calls the nation is the totality of institutions which have a com-

munity of interest, while the state is the political institution, one among many, the only legitimate function of which is to co-ordinate the activities of the others so that they do not hurt each other. The state is therefore, both a necessary cultural agency, since some regulation is needed, and also the potential danger to the whole of culture since it must have a monopoly of force in order to fulfill its function.

Throughout the book, the author illustrates his points by reference to the life of primitive communities. The use of this material is most valuable in the demonstration of the relationship of freedom to the practical attainment of goals by the use of artifacts which can only be provided in an institutional setting. There is, perhaps, too great a leap between the simple organization of primitive communities and the complexity of a modern civilization, but on the whole the author justifies the use of his illustrations in particular points.

Dr. Malinowski's understanding of freedom is a valuable insight into the meaning of that term in history. Some Christian Socialists might wonder whether his use of the word is entirely legitimate. Nevertheless, most would support his general indictment of the use of freedom as an abstract concept unrelated to practical living. Indeed, the author, more profoundly than he knew has revealed the ambiguity of existence in history by the definition which he uses for freedom. He understands that freedom on the level of history involves the acceptance of controls as well as absence of them. He appreciates the fact that while freedom is meaningless apart from action, every action itself is a temporary limitation upon freedom.

The chief difficulties of the book lie

in two directions. The first is philosophical. Dr. Malinowski has attempted to do the impossible in attempting to analyze culture solely from the point of view of instrumentalism. In other words, he has put himself in the position of judging values without making value judgments. Therefore, his discriminations between oppressive institutions and those which allow freedom are necessarily arbitrary. Therefore, he is unable to appreciate the cultural role of religion in any other terms than supplying a "mystical" sanction to ethical codes. Therefore, he ends up in the position of ascribing a virtue to a world-state—that it will not be tyrannical—which he denies to all lesser states.

The second difficulty arises from the first—a failure to understand the nature of man. He does not understand the nature and function of power in history, nor the tendency for all men to use whatever cultural institutions happen to be handy, regardless of their theoretical functions, for the purposes of self-aggrandizement. Consequently, he does not appreciate the nature of the present war on its profoundest level, because war is not simply the mobilization of one cultural institution among many for the purpose of preying on its neighbors. The author neglects almost entirely the problem of freedom, according to his own definition, in the complexities of an industrial and technical civilization, failing to recognize that economic institutions as well as political can be used for power purposes. As a result he fails to appreciate the nature of politics, which he badly over-simplifies.

The author devotes a great part of his book to dealing with the semantics of the terms, freedom and culture. Both his analysis and the general thesis of the

book need an appreciation of the historical function of ideology.

In spite of these criticisms, this is a valuable book for those who are looking for a corrective to the popular uses of freedom inasmuch as the meaning of this term is of vital significance in the issues of contemporary world affairs.

Charles D. Kean.

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RE-EDUCATING GERMANY, by Werner Richter, Chicago University Press. \$3.50.

The tragedy of Germany is so terrible, both in the depth of evil to which the nation sank and the great gifts which were corrupted in that depth, that we need every flash of illumination which can be thrown upon the task of her reconstruction. Dr. Richter, now a professor at Elmhurst College, was for many years the Minister of Culture of Prussia and was intimately related to the whole cultural life of Germany. He gives us many valuable glimpses into the religious, political and cultural situation of the Weimar days. His analysis of pre-Hitler academic life is particularly valuable in terms of the light which he throws upon the glory and the weakness of the cult of "scientific objectivity" to which the German university was committed and which availed it so little when resources were required to stem the tide of a demonic religion. Dr. Richter explains very clearly why a moribund church was more powerful in its resistance to Hitler than the University.

Richter is a man of profound Christian faith who sees no hope for a reconstructed Germany except within the frame of Christianity; but he is certain that to achieve this end the Christian faith must be more vitally related to the



political and social issues than it was in republican Germany, just as social radicalism must overcome its rationalist and materialist illusions about man and his history. Richter is, in other words, a socialist Christian, whose convictions have the greater value for being worked out in and through the special history of this specially tragic nation.

One is tempted to go into greater detail than this review will permit into the specific suggestions which Richter makes for the special problems of Germany.

Richter is no apostle of a "soft" peace. He recognizes for instance that Germany will find difficulty in repenting of her sins partly because the average German will not even know the enormity of those sins; and he makes interesting suggestions for an educational program which will make Germans aware of the brutal terror by which they governed and enslaved a continent.

One has the uneasy feeling that the kind of stern but real justice which Richter regards as a prerequisite of German repentance actually sets a standard much higher than the victorious nations will achieve, according to present indications. This raises the question whether the repentance of a nation is possible, when the justice of God is so poorly symbolized by the sword of the victors. One realizes that one of the most tragic aspects of human history lies in the fact that the pride of victors obscures the majesty of God and thereby confuses the soul of the vanquished.

The spiritual, as well as political and economic breakdown in Germany will be so great that the nation is more likely to be driven to despair rather than repentance. This might be true even if the nation were to be judged by some

relatively impartial judge. But since nations are still judges in their own case, the pride of victors will quite likely aggravate the despair which a general breakdown will produce.

It is nevertheless important to know what the internal and external conditions for a possible reclamation of a criminal nation are; and Dr. Richter has stated those conditions with courage and insight.

R. N.

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#### PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERSTANDING AND RELIGIOUS TRUTH, \$2.50.

Dr. Frank is an emigre scholar, now doing research at Harvard. His analysis of the relation between philosophy and religion is one of the profoundest studies of our day and proves again how deeply indebted American culture is to the European scholarship which Hitler forced upon us. For American culture was threatened on every hand by the flat and shallow perspectives which were the fruit of our preoccupation with science, whether natural or social, Dr. Frank's thesis is not new as far as theology is concerned, but it is novel to approach the problem as he does from the standpoint of philosophy.

In a sense his thesis is an elaboration of Unamuno's dictum that reason feeds of faith and faith on reason. The great affirmations of faith in the reality of God and in His power as creator, for instance, are not, according to Frank, propositions which can be proved by reason. They are propositions with which reason begins. The cosmological and the ontological arguments lie at the foundation of philosophy; but it is not possible, as Medieval philosophy attempted, to try by its own power to master what it pre-



supposes. If it seeks to do this it creates the skeptical reaction of modern philosophy, which however has its own presuppositions of faith. Dr. Frank's chapter on "Creation and Time" is particularly rewarding a most convincing exposition of the meaning of the Biblical conception of the relation of the historical to the eternal.

The whole volume represents a fresh and vigorous treatment of ancient philosophical and religious problems. Viewing the ultimate issues from various perspectives, the author shows that faith is not so much a "leap" beyond the limits of reason but rather the foundation upon which reason stands.

R. N.

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THE ECONOMIC ORDER AND DEMOCRACY, by Frank H. Knight and Thornton W. Merriam. 1945. Harper's. \$3.00.

The eminent economist who, in this book, explains why Christianity is either irrelevant or harmful to modern democracy does this with so much candor, such obvious fairness, and so many brilliantly truthful observations that his discussion is very valuable for Christians. His Christian opponent in this symposium, unfortunately, is no match for him. Professor Knight insists that Christianity has never produced any active, history-shaping force but has always sanctified ideals found worthy on other grounds; that it is essentially authoritarian and quietistic (and good insofar as it makes for stability); while its social reformers generally substitute a vague and indiscriminating brotherliness for that hard and responsible intellectual work which alone can help us and which is the best virtue of a liberal society.

Professor Knight subsumes Christian-

ity, on the basis of a brief survey of its history, under his general verdict on religion. He fails to see that Christianity, after having outlived the immediate eschatological expectations, was naturally thrown back on its prophetic heritage, which is the continual search for God's revelation in history. This is what distinguishes Hebrew prophecy and prophetic Christianity from all other religions and makes them activistic, in contrast also to the Greek current in Christianity with its quest for wisdom as the means to peace. The same objection can be put differently: Knight's contrast between the incessant liberal search after new truths and the acceptance of the stable religious truth, which is God, misses the point: God is not a substitute for the changing truths of liberal activism but is beyond them all—the infinite source of all infinite values. But He also is what Knight's programmatic liberalism does not have and yet requires: the source and guarantee of the oneness of the world from whom the oneness of truth, peace, and justice and their changing applications are derived. K's assertion that obedience to God practically means obedience to an earthly representative of God is patently untrue: in the name of God all schisms and reformations were justified; he overlooks that all Christian history oscillates between the two poles of Rom. 13:1-2 and Acts 5:29, of which he knows only the former. One is also surprised to read that Christianity's connection with things of beauty is only second-hand, since the church, like worldly powers, makes use of esthetic adornment. The most sublime works in both architecture and music have actually been inspired by Christianity. Finally, his typically liberal view does not understand the tragedy of history, and the more than human love without which



we could not live in its midst.

This brings us to the other side of Knight's picture, the liberal one. If he is right in saying that Christianity had no part in developing liberalism, then Christianity also has had no part in the terrible catastrophe in which the liberal age is ending before our eyes, and of which no inkling is found in the book. He regards capitalism as rather less controversial than other systems would be; he does not understand the basic conflict in capitalism between the critical spirit from which it arises and the aristocratic structure which it produces. He does not see that his enlightened system

has devastated the beauty and fertility of the land as no other system has ever done. Nor does he mention the degradation of human work, which must not be blamed on the machine but solely on its abuse by capitalism. He fails to see that protectionism, which he rejects, is indispensable under capitalism for the protection of private fixed capital against the hazards of the world market, just like monopoly, which he partly defends. All this seems to be due to his blindness to the fundamental corruptibility of the reason which liberalism takes as its sole guide.

EDUARD HEIMANN.

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